

face of an unfavorable attitude of a committee chairman.

In the General Assembly of Maryland in both houses it is very easy to get a bill on the floor, even in the face of unfavorable committee action.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Gallagher.

DELEGATE GALLAGHER: Is it not equally true that the members of the General Assembly have been known not only to see to it, when they were ill-disposed toward a bill that it might be taken up in committee when there were only a few persons present, but also on some occasions, some of the chairmen have refused to bring up the bill for consideration by the committee, so you never get an opportunity to get a vote on it?

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate James.

DELEGATE JAMES: I would have to answer that question by saying the committee chairman in the General Assembly of Maryland has a relatively weak position compared with the congressional system. The majority of the committee simply can tell the committee chairman what to do in the General Assembly of Maryland, and that is an absolute fact. He may be persuasive and have certain persuasive authority, but the majority rules in those committees.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does any other delegate have questions for the sponsor of the amendment?

Delegate Koss.

DELEGATE KOSS: Delegate James, is it not true that the committees of the General Assembly have the authority at any point to declare either an executive session or to specifically ask certain people to leave?

DELEGATE JAMES: I would say that this is true. This will still remain true.

DELEGATE KOSS: I do not know whether this is in order at the moment, but my understanding of the amendment would make it impossible for an interested citizen to know what the vote was.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate James.

DELEGATE JAMES: The vote on the floor is a real test, is it not?

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Koss.

DELEGATE KOSS: Again, I was concerned, and I agree, it is not relevant in terms of the bills that are killed in the committee.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are there any further questions of the sponsor?

Delegate Della.

DELEGATE DELLA: Mr. Chairman, in reference to the committee —

THE CHAIRMAN: Just a second, Delegate Della. This is a period of questions to the sponsor. I will recognize you in a moment. Are there any further questions to the sponsor?

Delegate Fornos.

DELEGATE FORNOS: Senator James, did your last session of the Senate pass a conflict of interest law?

DELEGATE JAMES: I could refuse to answer that question on the basis that it might incriminate the House.

DELEGATE FORNOS: What happened to that bill?

DELEGATE JAMES: The bill passed the Senate, but it was defeated in the House.

DELEGATE FORNOS: That never came out of the house committee, is that not right?

DELEGATE FORNOS: Well, that was due to the lack of energy on the part of the house members to see that it did get on the floor. It was a very simple procedure. I think you need fifteen people to bring it up on the floor. Fifteen energetic members could have called for the vote.

THE CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired.

Is there any discussion?

Delegate Della.

DELEGATE DELLA: Mr. Chairman, and ladies and gentlemen: I think from the colloquy that has taken place here this morning that the action of the committee on final votes considering bills is extremely significant, and equally as significant as what takes place on the floor of the General Assembly, because one of the functions of the General Assembly, unfortunately or fortunately, depending upon your point of view, is to kill legislation as well as to pass legislation.

I think it is quite obvious in the final vote on the committee then when bills are killed is certainly equally as significant as the final vote on the floor of either chamber when bills are killed or passed. It is just a question of when the funeral takes place.